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## NOTES

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### I. MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

#### AMERICAN CITIES

**St. Louis.**<sup>1</sup>—*Street Railway Franchises.* The conditions under which street railway franchises are granted are governed by Article III of the city charter, which gives to the mayor and assembly the power to take all needful steps, in and out of the state, to protect the rights of the city, in any corporation in which the city may have acquired an interest; to have sole power and authority to grant to persons or corporations the right to construct railways in the city, subject to the right to amend, alter or repeal any such grant in whole or in part, and to regulate and control the same, as to their fares, hours and frequency of trips, and the repair of their tracks, and the kind of their rails and vehicles; but every right so granted shall cease, unless the work of construction shall be begun within one year from the granting of the right, and be continued to completion with all reasonable practical speed, and it shall be the cause of forfeiture of the rights and privileges derived from the city, of any railroad company operating its road only within this city, which shall allow any person to ride or travel on it gratuitously or for less than usual price of fare, unless such person be an officer or employee of such company.

The number of miles of lines in operation and the payments into the city treasury during the last ten years have been as follows:

| Year ending in<br>Month of April | Number of<br>Miles | Amount of<br>Payments |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1894 .....                       | 296.9              | \$23,071 11           |
| 1895 .....                       | 300.8              | 29,587 10             |
| 1896 .....                       | 283.22             | 48,514 19             |
| 1897 .....                       | 299.31             | 69,817 40             |
| 1898 .....                       | 300.04             | 51,808 52             |
| 1899 .....                       | 300.13             | 81,181 30             |
| 1900 .....                       | 317.75             | 75,780 97             |
| 1901 .....                       | 336.09             | 78,861 55             |
| 1902 .....                       | 329.86             | 98,053 79             |
| 1903 .....                       | 327.86             | 105,857 78            |

The fare charged on all lines is five cents. The street railway companies of St. Louis are controlled by two corporations, the St. Louis Transit Company and the St. Louis and Suburban Railway Company. The companies give transfers over their own lines, but there is no interchange system of transfers between the two companies.

<sup>1</sup> Communication of James G. McConkey, Secretary to the Mayor of St. Louis, Mo.

**Buffalo.**<sup>2</sup>—*Railway Franchises.* Street railway franchises in Buffalo are granted under the following provision of the revised city charter, to-wit:

"The common council, by a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each board, may permit the track of any steam railroad or railroad operated by any other motive power and used for purposes other than the transportation of passengers only, to be laid in, along or across any street or public ground, except park and park approaches. Nothing in this section shall prevent the common council, by a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each board, from permitting the track of a street railroad used solely for the transportation of passengers within the city, to be laid in, along or across any street or public ground, except parks or park approaches, subject to the provisions of any law then existing in relation thereto."

Payments into the treasury of the city of Buffalo by street railways were made as follows:

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| January 1, 1892, to June 30, 1892..... | \$15,072 06 |
| July 1, 1892, to June 30, 1893.....    | 27,445 06   |
| July 1, 1893, to June 30, 1894.....    | 29,962 14   |
| July 1, 1894, to June 30, 1895.....    | 39,615 07   |
| July 1, 1895, to June 30, 1896.....    | 45,613 74   |
| July 1, 1896, to June 30, 1897.....    | 45,294 68   |
| July 1, 1897, to June 30, 1898.....    | 48,219 62   |
| July 1, 1898, to June 30, 1899.....    | 48,593 46   |
| July 1, 1899, to June 30, 1900.....    | 51,573 80   |
| July 1, 1900, to June 30, 1901.....    | 76,255 54   |
| July 1, 1901, to June 30, 1902.....    | 95,760 04   |

The length of the International Traction Company's railroad lines within the city limits is 194 miles, and the rates of fare charged are five cents for an adult and three cents for a child between five and twelve years of age, children under five years being carried free.

Various companies constituting the International Traction Company give transfers over all lines for one fare.

**Minneapolis.**<sup>3</sup>—*Civic Improvement Associations.* Minneapolis has several societies interested in municipal improvements. Most of these organizations are local outdoor improvement associations which confine their attention to well-defined sections of the city,—their own neighborhoods. Among the oldest and most active of these is the Portland Avenue Improvement Association. It has been in existence for upwards of fifteen years and has exerted a marked influence in securing improvements in streets, lawns and parkways. It has been given the street-sprinkling contract in its vicinity by the city for some years in competition with the regular contractors. After paying for work at standard wages and with an eight-hour day, the society has saved enough from the allowance to carry on important improvement work. Among other active local associations of this kind may be men-

<sup>2</sup> Communication of Frank W. Hinckley, Secretary to the Mayor, Buffalo.

<sup>3</sup> Communication of William A. Schafer, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

tioned the improvement associations in Sunny Side, Oak Park, Linden Hill and Prospect Park.

Besides the local associations there is one for the city as a whole, the Minneapolis Improvement League, of which Professor W. W. Folwell, of the University of Minnesota, is president, and Mrs. C. W. Keyes is secretary. This organization has been in existence since 1892. A few months ago an effort was made to get all the local societies to co-operate through the league by sending delegates to the regular monthly meetings of that organization. That plan has since been followed. The league has always worked in close harmony with the Park Board, in whose rooms the regular monthly meetings are held. During the last few years the league has awakened a very general interest among people of moderate incomes in the care of lawns, back yards and streets, also among school children in improvement and care of playgrounds and school lawns. This was done through a series of prizes for the best effects produced and through suggestions made in the public press of what might be accomplished with a little effort and attention.

Another important organization interested in municipal improvements of all kinds is the Minneapolis Commercial Club. The public affairs committee of that club, of which Wallace G. Nye is secretary, takes an active interest in all kinds of civic improvements and co-operates with the Improvement League in furthering the work of adding to the city's outdoor attractions.

**New Jersey State Civic Federation.**<sup>4</sup>—This organization is made up of various civic and municipal leagues formed in 1902, and including at the present writing seventeen clubs which bear the following:

Board of Trade, Asbury Park, N. J.; Civic Club of Newark; City Improvement Society, New Brunswick, N. J.; Civic Association of Nutley; Town Improvement Association of Montclair; Taxpayers' Association, Collingswood, N. J.; West End Improvement Association, Irvington, N. J.; Village Improvement Association, Cranford, N. J.; Vailsburgh Social Club; Civics Club of the Oranges; Citizens' Association, Morristown, N. J.; Second Ward Improvement Association, Irvington, N. J.; Board of Trade, Hammonton, N. J.; Town Improvement Society, Summit, N. J.; The Good Government Club, Arlington, N. J.; Civic Sanitation Association, Orange, N. J.; Orange Political Study Club.

The Federation originated in the recognition of the fact that there were certain questions which lay naturally beyond the province and power of any one civic organization, questions involving more than one municipality, such as matters of transportation, taxation, sewage disposal, the transmission of light and power, and questions of a similar nature.

The responses to the call for co-operation were very favorable, and a number of organizations joined in the formation of a state civic federation. Eighteen organizations were represented at the first meeting, which was held in Orange in the latter part of 1902. Matters were presently put in such shape as to make it possible to call a general conference lasting for two days. A number of speakers were present from various localities and an interesting

<sup>4</sup> Communication of Adolph Roeder, President of the Federation, East Orange, N. J.

meeting was the result. Since its formation the State Civic Federation has received into membership a number of other organizations, and its request to mayors and executives of municipalities that they join in membership with the organization has met with favorable reception.

The general plan of the organization is to ask the co-operation of each one of its constituents in considering whatever questions may arise, preparing a digest of their considerations, and submitting that as a report to one of the meetings of the Executive Board or to the annual session of the organization.

Thus far the State Civic Federation has accomplished the following: It has created a series of committees on the following general lines: Water Supply Franchises, Taxation, Liquor Traffic, Legislative Measures, Dependents, Delinquents and Municipal Arts; it has received an able report from the first two committees on Water Supply and on Franchises. It has reason to believe that several suggestions made in the latter report have been helpful in two or three municipalities in New Jersey, in causing discussion of franchises which otherwise would have been granted without question; it has produced an interchange of thought and of opinion among its constituents which has been exceedingly useful and helpful. It took a prominent part in calling the attention of the voters to various favorable and unfavorable aspects of the special election for the purpose of adopting a constitutional amendment in reference to the judiciary of the state. Through its activity, as manifested in the press of the state, it was found that the method of procedure was illogical and that desirable as the proposed amendments may have been the method of securing them by election was one which could not be carried through. The amendments were, of course, lost, owing to the fact that no one, from the election officers to the voters, had any intelligent grasp of the directions for voting. The Federation tried to render its services to its constituents and to the state by simply calling attention distinctly to the various pros and cons connected with constitutional amendment and the method of securing it, but ventured no opinions whatever on the relative material of the various sections of the amendment, since it left that discussion to the legal fraternity who were better able to carry it forward.

#### FOREIGN CITIES

**England.**—*Sanitation of Congested Areas.*<sup>5</sup> At the annual conference of the Royal Institute of Public Health, held at Liverpool, on the sixteenth of July, 1903, considerable attention was paid to the question of rehousing the poor on the outskirts of the larger cities.

In the Section on Sanitation of Congested Areas, Mr. Austin Taylor, M. P., Liverpool, presided, and said that they were only on the threshold of an enormous slum problem—a monster whose outward aspect was one of bricks and mortar, but in the interior dark with the tragic fate of men, women, and especially children, whose dreary mechanical life was only ended by death.

<sup>5</sup> This account of the conference is taken from a report made to the Department of State by the American Consul at Birmingham, Hon. Marshal Halstead.

It was useless to cure plague spots in the center of the cities and to let the outlying belt grow up in a haphazard fashion. He suggested that municipalities should be allowed to buy land three miles outside their boundaries, where streets could be laid out on model lines, trees preserved, and a general style of architecture insisted upon. There must be expansion to cure congestion, and for that purpose he also advocated the compulsory acquirement of suitable areas on moderate terms, the reduction of interest on public loans for demolition and rehousing, and rating of vacant sites on their capital value, by which model dwellings could be erected at not greater rent than one shilling (24 cents) per room weekly.

Dr. James Niven, medical officer for Manchester, in a paper on "Rehousing the Poor on the Outskirts of Large Cities," said it was generally recognized an effort should be made by the sanitary authorities to house as many as possible of the poorer working-class families on the outlying parts of these districts, under the improved conditions of light, air, space, and construction of dwellings. So far, efforts in this direction had been the result of private enterprise and confined to persons above the laboring classes. A great impulse had already been given to the movement outward by the development of electric trams. With a view to housing persons displaced by sanitary and other improvements, the Manchester corporation had purchased a considerable estate in the northern limit, which is well provided with transportation facilities. A committee had just begun the development of this estate by the construction of a main road and were erecting on and adjoining this road dwellings for artisans not of the poorest class, and were taking other steps to form a new colony. Powers were being sought to enable the Manchester corporation to provide shops, schools, churches and other institutions, but a complete scheme had not yet been framed. Meantime, the Manchester corporation were endeavoring to provide model dwellings of various types which would assist in improving the future provision of houses by private enterprise. The corporation had bought Plackley estate of 237 acres at £150 (\$729.97) per acre and were erecting eighty dwellings on it at moderate rents; but a portion of the estate would not be built on, being intended for allotments. In the center of Manchester eight unsanitary areas had been dealt with, of which three were to be left open spaces, while on the other side provision had been made for 2,729 people in lieu of 3,127 displaced. Apart from the humanitarian aspect of the question, it was good finance for municipalities to remove as many people as possible from the centers of the cities to a more wholesome atmosphere and all-around better conditions of the outskirts.

**Mexico.—Street Railways.** The transition from horse to electric traction is still in its infancy in Mexico. In the capital city of the republic, it is true, but few horse-car lines remain, but in the larger towns of the states the old system of animal traction still prevails. It is an interesting fact that in granting franchises to street railway companies, the public authorities have very generally kept in view the cost of the service to the public rather than the return to the city treasury. As a result street railway fares in Mexico, especially in the smaller towns, are lower than in any other part of the world. Thus in Guadalajara (State of Jalisco), which may be regarded

as one of the typical towns of the second magnitude (population about 102,000), the fares within the city limits are three cents Mexican silver, which is equivalent to about one and one-third cents in American money. The fares on the suburban lines range from three to ten cents Mexican silver (one and one-third to four and one-third cents American money), in the second-class cars, according to the distance traveled. In the first-class cars on suburban lines the fares range from five to sixteen cents Mexican silver (two and one-fifth to six and nine-tenth cents American money). It is true that in most cases long-distance travel is more expensive in Mexico than in the United States, but it must always be kept in mind that the bulk of the traffic is on the lines within the city limits.

The next few years are likely to witness marked changes in the street railway systems of the larger towns. Franchises for change of motive power to electricity have been granted very generally. The utilization of the abundant water power which exists in many parts of the republic, for the production of electricity, has contributed much towards hastening this movement.

*Water Supply and Sanitation of Municipalities.*—One of the most striking features of recent municipal development in Mexico is the care and attention that is being given to the improvement of the water supply of the larger cities of the republic. Where the resources of the municipalities have not been sufficient to meet the expense, the state governments have stepped in to aid in the work. In two notable instances, Cuernavaca in the State of Morelos, and Guadalajara in the State of Jalisco, an entirely new water system has been constructed at the expense of the state and an arrangement entered into with the respective municipalities to pay the interest and amortization charges of the debt thus incurred.

Concurrent with the improvement of the water supply, and largely as a result of it, there has been a marked betterment in the sanitary condition of the towns. The cleanliness of most of the cities of the republic is a matter of surprise to every traveler. Within recent years the sanitary inspection of dwelling houses has been thoroughly organized, usually directed and controlled by a state board of health, with agents in every town and district. This board also exercises close supervision over food products, a matter of special importance in a country where the low rate of wages adds to the temptation to adulteration of food products in order to bring prices within the range of the consumer.

*Police System.*—It requires some time for the stranger to acquaint himself with the intricacies of the police system of Mexico. In addition to the municipal police of the towns, there is a state constabulary which usually does duty in the country districts, but may also be called upon to do service in the towns where the local police is unable to handle the situation. Finally there are the federal troops distributed throughout the country in those sections where their presence is likely to do most good.

The states are divided into districts with an executive head known as the *jefe político* appointed by the governor. The *jefe político* is responsible for the good order of the district placed under his authority. He has charge

of the local police, may call upon the state constabulary, and in case of emergency may apply to the commander of the federal troops for aid.

The excellent order that now prevails throughout most of the states of the Mexican Republic, the very general respect for life and property, are due, in the main, to the control of the state governments over the police system. To have handed over to the town authorities the management of the police force would have resulted in personal and class discriminations and would have given rise to local conflicts. At present the management of the local and state police force is conducted with exclusive view to the maintenance of order and the protection of property rights. That this service is being performed is attested by the increasing swiftness with which crime is detected and punished.

*Municipal Administration.*—Although Mexico is a federal republic, the system of municipal government is practically uniform throughout the several states. In this branch of the public administration, more than in any other, the influence of the Spanish system is to be found. In fact, the form of local government, as introduced by Cortez, has undergone but little change. The Mexican *ayuntamiento* does not differ materially from its Spanish prototype. Every town, whether large or small, has its council elected by what is known as the "indirect" or "second degree" system. The voters choose electors who, in turn, select the members of the council. As a matter of fact this system of indirect election gives to the state authorities considerable influence in determining who should be selected.

The powers of the council are mainly deliberative: the execution of its decisions being usually entrusted to the *jefe político* of the municipal district—a state officer appointed by the governor and responsible to him alone. In some states, such as Morelos, the *jefe político* is *ex officio* president of the municipal council, in others, such as Jalisco, he is purely executive officer.

It is evident that with the executive head of each municipality appointed by the governor, the state authorities are able to maintain control over local affairs. This control is further strengthened by the fact that in all the states the budget of every town must be submitted to the central government for approval before becoming effective, and in a majority of the states, all important decisions of the municipal council relating to local affairs must receive the approval of the governor.

Another important factor tending to increase the influence of the state governments in local affairs, is the small, in fact almost insignificant, income of the towns. In the main, they are dependent upon the proceeds of the municipal markets, slaughter-houses, license fees and a few local excises. Whenever, therefore, an important public work is to be undertaken, the state government is usually appealed to. The water supply of most of the larger towns, outside the City of Mexico, has been planned and constructed at the expense of the respective state governments. The debt thus incurred is usually charged against the municipality and the state reserves from the proceeds of water rents a percentage sufficient to pay the interest and amortization charges.

As a final and culminating factor in the centralization of local affairs,

some of the states, such as Jalisco, have taken over the entire public school and poor relief system, administering them directly through state officials, a director of public instruction and a director of charities. The entire expense for these services is borne by the state treasury. The adoption of this plan was made necessary by reason of the absence of a well-defined local sentiment to support these services.

Thus the traditions of Spanish and French administrative centralization have been developed in Mexico to their logical consequences. Although with each change of political system, there has been some modification of the form of local government, the policy of state control over local affairs has remained practically unchanged. Local self-government is unknown in Mexico, and there seems to be no immediate prospect of change in the direction of a more decentralized system.

In spite of the absence of local control over municipal affairs, the Mexican towns are by no means devoid of local spirit, but it is social rather than civic. The town represents a center for social intercourse and recreation rather than a corporation for the performance of public services. As a matter of fact, the main function of the town authorities seems to be to supply public amusement—such as concerts, theaters, etc. In towns of three and four thousand inhabitants the authorities will not fail to supply a public concert at least twice a week and in some places every evening. The larger cities own at least one theater and make every effort to supply the inhabitants with drama, comedy and operetta at the lowest possible prices.

This policy has created a feeling of town loyalty which is at first surprising, but is to be explained by the fact that municipal spirit in its narrower sense of attachment to the town is aroused by the recreations and amusements offered by the town to a far greater degree than by the efficiency of the more fundamental services, such as police system and water supply.

*Municipal Theaters.*—The authorities of the City of Mexico have recently adopted a plan intended to secure to the masses the presentation of standard dramas and comedies at popular prices. For this purpose the municipality has leased one of the leading theaters and has advertised for sealed proposals from theatrical managers. The theater is to be given rent free on condition that a certain number of plays be presented at greatly reduced prices. The government has two objects in view, first, to diminish the attraction of the dram shops and, secondly, to counteract the influence of the lower class of variety theaters. If the experiment proves successful it is likely to result in a further extension of the plan so as to include a municipal theater, which shall have as its main purpose the furnishing of elevating amusements to the people.